

ANCIENT ARCHITECTURE AT RECULVER, KENT.

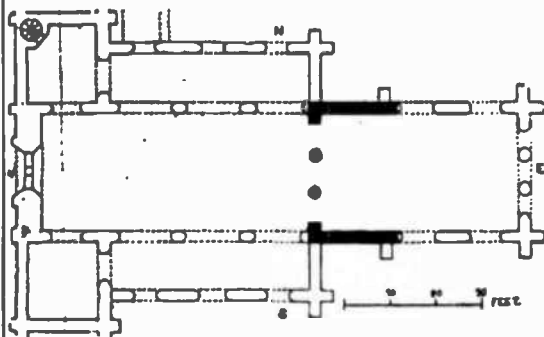


Fig. 1. Ground Plan of Reculver Church.

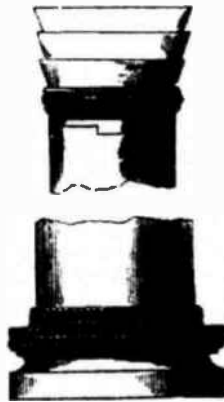


Fig. 2. Roman Architecture, now destroyed. Height of Column, 17 feet; height of Arch, 22 feet.

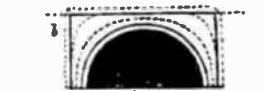


Fig. 3. Column supporting Chancel Arch. A. Plan of Column, the dotted lines showing the Plan of the Cap.

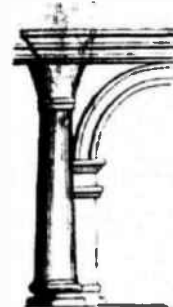


Fig. 4. Inner Basilica.

ON MOULDED BRICKS.

A STRONG opinion on a popular subject well expressed and unflinchingly adhered to, is generally a sufficient stock in trade to enable most men to go through their public life not only with respectability, but very often with reputation. The man becomes the symbol of that particular opinion, and at last is perfectly identified with it. As with men, so with history. Each age has had its favourite cry—its particular enlargement of some one idea. The peculiarity of the present century consists in the multitude of its cries.

Among these there was one which much interested the members of the architectural profession. Somehow or other a cry went about that the art, no longer able to support herself, was declining, and therefore something must be done for her. Accordingly every body began, after a fashion, to encourage the art. Local committees of respectable tradesmen advertised competitions for impossible buildings, at impossible prices, with microscopic premiums for the successful candidates. Noblemen presented gold medals to rising artists at different societies. The Camden Society thundered, and, lastly, Government experimented on a School of Design.

The result of this is, that decent churches are now built, one or two fine public buildings erected, and the system of ornament is a step or two in advance of what it was in George the Third's time.

But here the improvement has hitherto stopped. The common domestic architecture has remained nearly in *status quo*. Stone, of course was dear, and not to be thought of. Isigo Jones and Wren had done some very excellent things in moulded brick, but the legislative wisdom had laid a heavy tax upon all bricks; except those of the standard size; so the only thing to be done was to use a nice new invention which had just come up,

and accordingly Nash and Wyatt showed us what could be done with stucco and Roman cement, by means of which we could turn the fronts of our houses into Roman palaces "in petto."

But another change has come over the spirit of the dream, and we are at last to have a material which really will last, and which is equally susceptible of ornament, and requires no painting or repairs. The duty is at last taken off brick.

This is not the place, or much might be quoted concerning its history: perhaps no manufacture has a more respectable and complete genealogy, from the time when

"Of brick and of that stuff they cast to build
A city and town whose top might reach the skies,
And get themselves a name,"

down through the brick pyramid, the bricks mentioned by Vitruvius, and the Flemish churches and mansions of the middle ages, to the present day.

But now we have the power of using moulded bricks, what are we to do with it? into what forms are they to be moulded, and what will be the most advantageous mode of their application? Our illustrations will show what has been, and it remains for us to draw a useful lesson from them as to what we shall do in future.

The upper engraving (p. 390) is from Wolterton House in the parish of East Burslem, county of Norfolk. The illustrations show the gatehouse and its details, the same patterns being used in the other portions of the house, although the gateway bears the arms and supporters of Henry VIII., viz. the lion and griffin, whilst the porch of the house has those of his father, viz. a griffin and greyhound.

These latter arms, with the arch of which they form the ornaments, and the window over it, as well as the jambs of the arch shown in our engraving, are the only parts formed of

stone in the whole building: all the rest is brick, even the two figures on either side of the entrance, which Blomfield, in his "History of Norfolk," calls giants or wild men.* It is but fair to mention that these and some coats of arms of which no duplicates were wanted, are executed in cut brick not moulded. The building was probably begun by Sir Henry Fermor, and finished by his son Sir William Fermor, which last probably built the gatehouse.

Norfolk, from her want of stone, is particularly rich in old brick houses, many of which are well deserving of an attentive study. Not far from Swaffham, at the village of Cressingham, is a house, the whole of whose front is covered with tracery executed in a stone-coloured terra cotta.

Our second illustration is the entablature from the front wall of the British Museum, built by Puget in 1680, for Ralph, first Earl of Montague: the joints are most beautifully managed, especially the vertical ones, being less than one-eighth of an inch.

And this brings us to the principal drawback which we shall experience under the new state of things: and that is, that we shall see ornaments fearfully misplaced; those designed for a large building crushing a small one, and vice versa. But these mistakes will not last long. A man who sees his mistake will generally try to avoid it the next time, and in the course of a few years experience will have dictated what patterns are the best for use, and where they can be employed in the best taste, and with the greatest advantage.

We need scarcely remind our readers how useful the collection of terra cottas of Mr. Townley will now be found, and how admirably many of these subjects are adapted for friezes. Hitherto they have hardly been used, or, indeed, scarcely noticed, and yet there is no doubt but that some of them were modelled by the same artists whose works we so much admire in marble.

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UNDER the title of "The Antiquities of Richborough, Reculver, and Lymne," Mr. C. Roach Smith, assisted by Mr. F. W. Fairholt, has just now completed an interesting volume on the vestiges of Roman dominion discovered at the places named, and which contains much that is new and valuable. The history of Britain during the 400 years it was under the rule of the Romans is very incomplete. Every year, however, makes more evident how completely Britain was Romanized: their roads may be traced into every corner of the kingdom, and villas of elaborate plans, pavements of extraordinary beauty, amphitheatres, pottery, bronzes, coins, are being constantly brought to light. The labours of Mr. Roach Smith in this interesting field are well known, and his present contribution, enriched as it is by numerous sketches by Mr. Fairholt, will be found not the least of his labours. Kent was the scene of the earliest important events in the annals of our country: here the Roman conqueror landed; the first Anglo-Saxon kingdom was established; the banner of Christianity raised by Augustine.

Of the 268 pages which form the volume, 172 are devoted to Richborough, including an account of the various remains collected from thence by Mr. Rolfe, and now in his museum at Sandwich; 53 to Reculver, and 33 to Lymne. The latter is the scene of very recent successful investigations, but we shall look to the account of Reculver as containing matter more especially interesting to our readers. Every visitor to the Isle of Thanet has seen from a distance the two towers of Reculver, and many have visited the spot, though somewhat difficult of access,—grieved over the scandalous and unjustifiable destruction of the church,—and gazed wonderingly at the "broken framework of human bodies projecting from the black unctuous cliff," undermined by the waters.

During the demolition of the edifice a very remarkable portion was brought to light, which, up to the present time, has apparently

* When Blomfield wrote, the building was more perfect than it is at present; our own impression, when we saw them was, that they were figures in armour, not wild men.
† London: John Russell Smith, Old Compton-street 1860.